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Other Side of the Desk

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"Ogden, Jefferson, Iowa Falls, Eldora and Grundy Center, here we come!" This is the cry of about 35 Home Economics majors as they depart for their student teaching destinations each quarter.

Student teaching is a vital part of Iowa State's program for education majors. It provides opportunity for students to put to use the skills and techniques they have acquired in their classes. Three or four girls teach at each of the five centers for half a quarter. For five and a half weeks, the students have complete responsibility for teaching one class and assisting with several others.

The girls give preferences for the town in which they would like to work, and after the first day on the job, the age group they would prefer to teach.

Students earn eight hours of credit for the course. The final grade is given by the supervising teacher at each center. Iowa State is unique in having instructors employed jointly by the university and the school system in each town. The supervising teacher, who usually has her master's degree, is responsible for guiding and assisting the girls at her center.

Housing for a student teacher, arranged by Iowa State, is ordinarily in a private home with one or two other teachers. Many of these homes have several rooms which are rented out each quarter to students from Iowa State. One woman in Ogden has had student teachers staying with her for 15 years. While living in one of the five teaching centers, the girls follow college rules concerning women's hours.

Teaching becomes a very real thing to the girls after they have been a part of the profession. It is no longer just words on paper, but becomes the application of principles. Ellie Shackson, H. Ed. 4, recalls that her biggest challenge was to realize what things were vital for the pupils to learn. She felt she was apt to lose sight of over-all important concepts because of smaller details.

Everyday tasks of the profession come to life for student teachers. Making and giving tests was one of the hardest duties for Karen

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Other Side of the Desk

by Virginia Jones, H.Jl. 2

Green, H. Ed. 4. "I always said that when I became a teacher I would make my tests different. But, when I started writing my own, I found it one of the hardest jobs to do. A fair and conclusive test is not an easy thing to make."

Before they leave for their first job, many girls feel they aren't completely prepared to face all the problems and decisions of student teaching. Pat Gose, H. Ed. 4, believes a student never feels fully prepared until she actually starts working. Then she discovers she is better prepared than she had thought.

A false conception held by some is that student teachers don't have much to do except teach several hours of class a day. Miss Green feels that her experience of teaching was a hard and time-consuming responsibility. There are many lesson plans to write, bulletin boards to design and meetings and conferences to attend in addition to teaching classes. She was kept busy from 7 a.m. until midnight each school day.

How do the girls fit into their new environments? "Any anxieties we might have had about going to a strange town completely disappeared as soon as we arrived at our destination," recalls Sandy McLarnan, H. Ed. 4. "The people in the community were warm and friendly to us the very first day we were there. They made us feel as if we were really wanted. The high school students look forward to meeting their new student teachers and working with them." The new teachers are immediately included in many community functions and take an active part in faculty parties and community dinners. The college teachers are treated the same as full time instructors.

Chaperoning school dances is one of the responsibilities of faculty members, and student teachers are no exception. Miss Green found herself the center of attention at a Homecoming dance in Ogden. Homecoming was an exciting time for the pupils—especially for the boys who were making bets as to who would dance with the student teachers after the game. But at the dance all of the boys lost their nerve—all, that is, but one. He asked Miss Green to dance, and she tells that she thoroughly enjoyed the dance even though everyone else stood and watched in amazement.

Getting high school girls to model their clothing construction apparel in a style show is a project in itself. Two weeks of sly coaxing by the teachers preceded such an event in Ogden. After the style show, given for the mothers and faculty, all the pupils admitted it was much more fun than they had anticipated.

The young teachers are expected to participate in extra curricular activities at school. Miss Gose and Miss McLarnan, who were in Iowa Falls before and after the Christmas season, remember the time they spent making plans for the faculty Christmas banquet. The girls were responsible for decorations, food and invitations for 100 guests. Attending faculty and PTA meetings, selling tickets at school functions and advising FHA are all on the agenda of a busy student teacher.

All the hard work and late nights of the student teacher are repaid with satisfaction. Efforts don't go unnoticed by the pupils. Two students in Iowa Falls were well rewarded when their freshman girls gave a roller skating party for their "favorite" teachers.